

# **JACK THOMAS**

**PRESIDENT**

Western Illinois University

## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **EDUCATION**

Ph.D.      **English Literature and Criticism**  
Indiana University of Pennsylvania  
Indiana, Pennsylvania 1990  
Dissertation:



## **CURRENT ADMINISTRATIVE POSITION**

### **President**

**Western Illinois University Macomb and Moline, Illinois  
July 2011 to Present**

The president serves as the chief executive officer and spokesperson for the University, provides overall leadership on both the Macomb and Quad Cities (Moline) campuses, communicates and supports the University's strategic vision and plan (2012-2022 Strategic Plan: Higher Values in Higher Education), and ensures operational implementation of the strategic plan on two campuses. The president implements all Board of Trustees' policies, and is responsible for all functions of the University. In partnership with the Board of Trustees, the president is responsible





**FORMER ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS**

**Provost and Academic Vice President  
Western Illinois University**

Enhanced Online Course Offerings – Advocated for funding that yielded a six percent increase in the number of online course offerings.

Innovative Budgeting Planning – Created an innovative budget planning process wherein funds are allocated from the “bottom-up” rather than from the “top-down.”

Increased External Grant Funding – Encouraged an expansion of services offered by the Office of Sponsored Projects which resulted in an 8.2 percent increase in awards received by the University.

Assisted in Securing Fund Raising and Cultivating Relationships – Worked closely with the president to secure funding and attend alumni events to cultivate relationships with prospective donors.

State Government Relationships – Responded to legislative inquiries regarding academic matters, and contributed to reports and testimonies presented to the state legislature to garner additional support for the University.

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Provost Faculty Travel Awards – Established a program to award faculty funding for professional travel.

Administrative Searches – Chaired successful searches for the vice president for advancement and public services, the vice president for student services, and hired two deans.

**Middle Tennessee State University Murfreesboro, Tennessee  
June 2004 to January 2008**

**Senior Vice Provost for Academic Affairs, Interim Dean of the College of Continuing Education and Distance Learning, and Professor of English**

The senior vice provost for academic affairs provided leadership in all areas of academic administration including policy formulation and administration. Provided academic programs for over 22,800 students. Managed nine deans and over 1,200 faculty. Represented the president and provost in various meetings and responsibilities. Provided leadership and served as dean for the following programs: General Education, African American Studies, Aging Studies, Center for Popular Music, Cultural Diversity, Academic Enrichment, Global Studies, International Programs, Women's Studies, and the Adams Chair of Excellence. Was responsible for all promotion and tenure review in the Provost's Office. Served as liaison with the Tennessee Board of Regents and the Tennessee Higher Education Commission. Oversaw all curriculum issues and new programs. Served as primary Geier (desegregation decree) contact person. Handled all University Standing Committees. Oversaw multiple grant projects. Provided administration of the technology access fees, coordination of renovation projects, and facilities utilization/academic space allocation. Handled student complaints, grade appeals, as well as facilitated all University commencement



Enhanced Academic Program Reviews – Supervised a comprehensive academic program review process which included external reviewers for all programs and post review follow-up to strengthen the academic enterprise.

TK20 Assessment Instrument for National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE): Standard 2 – Coordinated the implementation of the system for the College of Education and Behavioral Sciences.

K-12 Partnership for Rutherford County Schools and K-6 Murfreesboro City Schools – Facilitated the partnership for the two school systems for the Middle Tennessee State University Teacher Education Program (largest program in the state).

Enhanced the Partnership Mentoring Program – Provided administrative leadership and coordinated the mentorship program for the Teacher Education program and Central Middle School.

Created New Faculty Mentoring Program – Established professional development initiatives for junior faculty.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) – Served as team member on a University committee that resulted in the re-accreditation of the University.

**University of Maryland Eastern Shore - Princess Anne, Maryland  
August 1990 to May 2004**

**Interim President**

The interim president served as the chief executive officer for the University accountable to the chancellor of the University System of Maryland and its Board of Regents. Represented the University in various meetings on the local, state and national levels. Oversaw all areas of the University including Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Administrative Affairs and Institutional Planning, Research and Assessment. Oversaw the day-to-day operations of an 1890 Land grant Institution with an enrollment of 3,400 students and more than 800 faculty and staff.

**Major Accomplishments:**

Enhanced Fundraising – Cultivated relationships with alumni and other perspective donors on a bi-weekly basis.

Enhanced Legislative Relations – Testified before the legislators and was successful in securing additional support for the University.

Expanded Community Engagement – Worked closely with community leaders and stakeholders to advance the positive working relationship between the University and the local community.

Developed New Academic Programs – Implemented three new Ph.D. programs.

**Executive Vice President**

The executive vice president served as the chief executive officer in the absence of the president. Represented the president in various meetings at the local, state and national level. Assisted the president in overseeing all areas of the University including



Image: The Scholar's Release. Oversaw the school newspapers and newsletters that were produced. Conducted scholarly research and presented papers at professional conferences and meetings. Sought grants and other sources of external funding. Provided staff support and area activity related to quality assurance. Taught at least two classes per academic year. Conducted faculty recruitment and team building and took students to professional meetings and graduate fairs.

**Major Accomplishments:**

Annual International English and Literature Conference – Created an International Conference where writers and scholars convened from across the United States and other countries such as: Finland, Germany, South Africa, Ireland, etc. to present their research.

Enhanced Curriculum – Initiated an overhaul of the curriculum within the Department of English and Modern Languages to reflect best practices and current pedagogy.

Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools (MSACS) – Served on Self-Study Steering Committee that resulted in the re-accreditation of the University.

Academic Team – Coached the UMES academic team that Placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the nation for the Honda All-Star Challenge.

**Other Teaching Experiences**

Chesapeake Community College  
Central Piedmont Community College  
Midland Technical Community College

**FUNDRAISING**

Exceeded the \$60 million fundraising goal, and raised \$63 million, as part of the WIU Capital Campaign  
Raised \$3.5 Million under leadership as interim president  
Worked with Choice and Marriott Hotels and other corporations to secure funding  
Caterpillar (secured \$52,500 for scholarships for underrepresented students)  
John Deere (worked on proposal for \$500,000 donation for engineering)  
Moline Foundation (worked on proposal for \$500,000 donation for engineering)  
Secured funding for the 'Enhancing Students' Writing Skills Project  
Attend alumni events as needed for cultivation of donors

**BOARD SERVICE**

Board Member, Illinois Board of Higher Education  
Board Member, American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)  
Board Member, Stillman College Board of Trustees  
Board Member, Illinois Campus Compact  
Board Member, American Association of Blacks in Higher Education  
Board Member, Macomb Area Economic Development Corporation  
Executive Board Member, Council of Fellows American Council on Education  
Board Member, Heart of Tennessee Chapter of the American Red Cross  
Board Member, Rutherford County YMCA

**NATIONAL, STATEWIDE, AND RELATED SERVICE**

Member, NCAA Division I Presidential Forum  
Chair, NCAA Accelerating Academic Success Program Selection Committee  
Chair, (AASCU) Christa McAuliffe Award Presidential Selection Committee

Member, Middle States Visitation Team – Kean University  
Member, Governor's Task Force on Education for the State of Maryland  
Chair, NCAA Governance, Rules and Compliance (Re-

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **Book**

Thomas, Jack. Within These Gates: Academic Work, Academic Leadership, University Life, and the Presidency, University Press of America (2015)

### **Articles, Book Chapters and Reviews**

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "Recruiting and Retaining People of Color at Majority Institutions." (submitted for publication)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "African-American Leadership in Higher Education." Lessons in Leadership: Executive Leadership Programs for Advancing Diversity in Higher Education, ELSEVIER, Inc. (2005)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "The Need for an African-American Literature Course and the Effects it has on African

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "The Symbolic Black Male Ancestor in

Thomas, Jackie "Jack", **Examining the Masculinity and Complexity of Black Males as Depicted in Damballah** 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Southern Conference on African American Studies, Jackson, Mississippi (February 11-13, 2010)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack", Williams, Ron, and Goldfarb, Alvin, **tion of Underrepresented Minorities at a Midwestern Majority Institution: Best**

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". **since** ,  
Southern Conference on African American Studies, Inc. Convention, Montgomery,  
Alabama (February 2005)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". , Trilogy  
Pioneers, Atlanta, Georgia (September 2004)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". , Southern University,  
Southern Conference on Afro-American Studies, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (February  
1999)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**A Critical Analysis of Joe Starks in Their Eyes Were  
Watching God**" , University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Zora Neale Hurston Society  
Fifteenth Anniversary National Conference, Princess Anne, Maryland (June 1999)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack" and President Dolores R. Spikes "**Beloved An Interpretation**" ,  
University of Maryland Eastern Shore Presidential Presentation, Princess Anne,  
Maryland (April 1999)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". **Color Purple** ,  
University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Breaking Barriers International Conference,  
Princess Anne, Maryland (October 1997)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack".  
**Beloved** , Clark - Atlanta University, Southern Conference on Afro-American Studies,  
Atlanta, Georgia (February 1997)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Milkman in Search of His Heritage**", Pennsylvania State  
University, Pan African Conference, State College, Pennsylvania (April 1995)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Macon Dead and His Abusive Behavior**", Southern University,  
Southern Conference on Afro-American Studies, Baton Rouge, Louisiana (February  
1995)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Joe and Ned: Positive Black Males in The Autobiography of  
Miss Jane Pittman**", Paul Quinn College, Southern Conference on Afro-American  
Studies, Dallas, Texas (February 1994)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Guitar: A Wise Secret Seven Member**", Indiana State  
University, Pan African Conference, Terre Haute, Indiana (April 1994)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Slavery: The Disruption of the Traditional African Family**",  
University of the District of Columbia, Caribbean Association of Professions, Washington,  
D.C. (May 1994)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Critical Analysis of Joe Starks in Their Eyes Were Watching  
God**", Clark – Atlanta University, Southern Conference on Afro-American Studies,  
Atlanta, Georgia (February 1993)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Slavery: The Disruption of the Traditional African Family**",  
Indiana State University, Pan African Conference, Terre Haute, Indiana (April 16-18,  
1992)

Thomas, Jackie "Jack". "**Jake: A Positive Black Male Character**", Virginia State  
University, Southern Conference on Afro-American Studies, Petersburg, Virginia  
(February 20-22, 1992)





- September 7, 2012 Panel Participant, 2012 Midwest Culturally Inclusive Conference, University of Wisconsin – Platteville, Platteville, Wisconsin
- January 31, 2012 Keynote Address, Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, Monmouth College, Monmouth, Illinois
- February 2011 Keynote Address, 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, Beta Pi Chapter, Alpha Phi Alpha, Lane College, Jackson, Tennessee
- January 2010 Keynote Address, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration City of Macomb, Macomb, Illinois
- January 2010 Keynote Address, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration Alpha Upsilon Lambda, Montgomery, Alabama
- November 2009 Keynote Address, "Educating for Extraordinary Success" The Scholars Academy Black & White Gala, Nashville, Tennessee
- January 2009 Keynote Address, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration, Burlington, Iowa
- January 2009 Keynote Address, Alpha Phi Alpha Founders' Day Celebration Upsilon Lambda, Montgomery, Alabama
- January 2009 Keynote Address, Alpha Phi Alpha Founders' Day Program Omicron Sigma Lambda, Murfreesboro, Tennessee
- June 2008 Commencement Speaker, Hyde Park Academy, Chicago, Illinois
- May 2008 Keynote Address, Founder's Day Convocation, Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University, Normal, Alabama
- March 2007 Speaker at Alpha Phi Alpha Regional Convention, "The Next Generation of Alpha Scholars: Professional and Graduate School Admission," Huntsville, Alabama
- January 2007 Speaker at Mitchell-Nielson Elementary, "Character Counts and Attitude Makes a Difference," Murfreesboro, Tennessee



- April 1995 Served as director for students in conducting research and presenting their papers at professional meetings.
- May 1994 Commencement Speaker, Lowndes Middle School Theme: "You Have Crossed the Bay, The Ocean Lies Ahead", Fort Deposit, Alabama
- March 1992 Guest Lecturer, Davison College, Theme: "Black Women Writers" Davison, North Carolina
- February 1992 Guest Lecturer, Chesapeake College, Theme: "Black Male Images in the Works of Alice Walker and Toni Morrison", Wye Mills, Maryland
- February 1992 Guest Speaker, Poplar Hill Correctional Camp, Theme: "The Role of the Black Male in the Family", Quantico, Maryland
- June 1991 Participant in the National Council of Black Studies Summer Institute Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
- May 1991 Commencement Address, Calhoun High School, Theme: "Follow the Right Path to Your Future Education", Calhoun, Alabama
- May 1990 Commencement Address, Lowndes Middle School, Theme: "A Strive for Excellence", Fort Deposit, Alabama
- March 1989 Lecturer, Pomona College, Topic: "A Good Man is Hard to Find" by

